

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for acknowledgment that the drawings are acceptable, for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449.

Upon entry of the above amendments claim 7 will have been canceled, claims 1 and 4-6 will have been amended, and claims 8-10 will have been submitted for consideration. Claims 1-6 and 8-10 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

On page 2 of the Official Action, the Declaration was objected to as omitting the residences of the inventors. Applicants note that the residences of the inventors are being submitted herewith in an application data sheet. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the Declaration.

On pages 2-4 of the Official Action, claims 1-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over TAKAYAMA (U.S. Patent No. 6,501,586).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a).

Applicants note that claim 1 has been amended to add the subject matter of previous claim 7 thereto, including a plurality of light sources that emit a plurality of light beams. Further, Applicants note that on page 5 of the Official Action, the Examiner acknowledges that the subject matter of claim 1 as amended (including the subject matter of previous claim 7) would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art based upon the teachings of TAKAYAMA alone. Applicants note that the teachings of TAKAYAMA are addressed in more detail below with regard to the rejection of previous claim 7.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of claims 1-6 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based upon TAKAYAMA is improper at least for the above-noted reason. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and an early indication of the allowance of these claims.

On pages 5 and 6 of the Official Action, claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over TAKAYAMA (U.S. Patent No. 6,501,586) in view of KOIDE (U.S. Patent No. 5,181,137).

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claim 7 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a). As an initial matter, Applicants note that claim 7 has been canceled, and as noted above, the subject matter thereof has been added to claim 1. Accordingly, this rejection will be addressed with respect to the remaining claims 1-6 and 8-10.

Claim 1, as presently amended, includes, inter alia, "a plurality of light sources that emit a plurality of light beams; a polygon mirror arranged to rotate about a rotation axis and having a reflection surface parallel to said rotation axis, said light sources being arranged to emit said light beams toward a substantially single point defined in a vicinity of said reflection surface of said polygon mirror, said light beams being distributed symmetrically with respect to a main scanning plane, said main scanning plane passing through said single point and being perpendicular to said rotation axis of said polygon mirror, said reflection surface deflecting said light beams so as to scan said light beams on different photoconductive drums".

Initially, as noted above, the Examiner acknowledges that the single light source system of TAKAYAMA lacks any disclosure of a plurality of light sources that emit a plurality of light beams. Applicants further submit that KOIDE also lacks any disclosure of light sources arranged to emit light beams *toward a substantially single point defined in a vicinity of a reflection surface of a polygon mirror*. Instead, Applicants note that the light beams in the system of KOIDE are directed toward the mirror in *parallel*, as shown in Figs. 4, 5B and 5C, and as explained at column 3, lines 42-46 (as pointed out by the Examiner). Accordingly, Applicants submit that the combined teachings of TAKAYAMA and KOIDE could not possibly be viewed as teaching the scanning optical system as recited in claim 1, which includes light beams emitted *toward a substantially single point defined in a vicinity*

of a reflection surface of a polygon mirror.

Applicants further note that the recited *light shielding member* is configured for blocking ghost light in a system in which light beams are emitted *toward a substantially single point defined in a vicinity of a reflection surface of a polygon mirror*. Such ghost light is clearly different than any non-disclosed ghost light in the single light source system of TAKAYAMA, and thus the claimed light shielding member is clearly different than any elements (such as elements 34, 97) shown in the single light source system of TAKAYAMA.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that the modification suggested by the Examiner would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, and particularly not based upon the teachings of TAKAYAMA and KOIDE, as suggested by the Examiner.

Applicants also submit that dependent claims 2-6 and 8-10, which are at least patentable due to their dependencies from claim 1, for the reasons noted above, recite additional features of the invention and are also separately patentable over the prior art of record.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) based on TAKAYAMA in view of KOIDE is improper at least for each and certainly for all of the above-noted reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection, and an early indication of the allowance of all of the pending claims.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION


Entry and consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Any amendments to the claims that have been made in this amendment, which do not narrow the scope of the claims, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered cosmetic in nature, and to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Yoshihiro HAMA et al.

 Reg. No. 48,214
Bruce H. Bernstein
Reg. No. 29,027

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GREENBLUM & BERNSTEIN, P.L.C.
1950 Roland Clarke Place
Reston, Virginia 20191
(703) 716-1191